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Northern Lambda Nord

Benj -

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COMMUNIQUE

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Volume III: Number 9

November 1982

▼ ELECTION REPORT - MAINE by Benj. ▼

Every two years at this time, Mainers are given the chance to choose their representatives in Augusta and in Washington, D.C.. In 1980, NLN sent a brief questionnaire to every candidate in the 14 State Assembly and 3 State Senate districts in Aroostook County quering them on their stand on equal protection for lesbians and gaymen. Of the over 30 candidates polled, only one responded (in support of a lesbian-gay rights bill), but she failed to win election. It must be assumed that the rest of the candidates either didn't feel that Lambda was important enough to require a reply or were simply non-supportive.

This political polling took a great deal of time and effort and has not been repeated this year. (I hope we will do it for the 1984 election.) In its stead, the following is a purely personal opinion on the political races in Aroostook County this year.

In order to gain some sense of the two major parties in Maine, I wrote for copies of the Maine State Republican and Democratic platforms -- those documents which give the party's positions on specific issues. Here's a summary of what I received.

THE REPUBLICANS IN MAINE. Their platform is a two-page, typed document with the following six headings: economic development, natural resources, human resources, crime and justice, education, and government operations. It is full of generalities ("Priority must be given to creating a more favorable business climate here in the State of Maine." "The Department of Environmental Protection should meet its statutory responsibilities in a reasonable, sensible, and timely manner." "We support a better climate in Maine for businesses and workers through the elimination of unnecessary regulations imposed by State government."), but it is sorely lacking in any specifics, i.e., how to create a more favorable business climate, what is "reasonable, sensible, and timely", and which ones are the "unnecessary" government regulations?

THE DEMOCRATS IN MAINE. Their platform is included in a 27-page booklet. The first ten pages is the platform, the balance includes the rules of the party. The platform

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itself is divided into nine chapters, each with several subsections. The chapters are: economic development, natural resources, energy, labor and employment, health/housing/human services, justice and equal rights, education and cultural affairs, government organization and public finance, and national defense and foreign policy. The one plank in the Maine Democratic platform which is important to us all is Chapter 6, Section 6.2, item 2: "We support the principle that people should not be denied their civil rights on account of sexual preference." -- the so-called gay rights plank. It is on this basis that I would recommend that you support Democrats in the election this year. Granted, individual candidates are not required to support their party's platform, but if you make the effort to find out who is running in your district and make a phone call to question their support of their party's platform, including the gay rights plank, you'll find out who our friends are.

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As far as specific candidates, the ones I recommend are Democrats: Paul Violette from Van Buren, running for re-election to the State Senate. He is the only Aroostook representative who voted for the gay rights bill in Augusta -- TWICE. And assuming that the bill will be re-introduced in 1983, we need all the support we can get in the legislature.

George Mitchell. Candidate for U.S. Senate. Yes. He's not a co-sponsor of the federal gay rights bill, but he's been supportive of personal rights issues. And his opponent, Dave Emery, has been a Reagan-person down-the-line; an unlikely candidate to support lesbian and gay rights.

And as far as the Olympia Snowe-James Dunleavy race for U.S. House of Representatives, she has stated repeatedly that she does not see a need for specific legal protection for gay people. (She's a Republican). I don't know Dunleavy's position, but he lives in Presque Isle. Give him a call and ask him. His office number is 764-4491; his home phone is 768-8941.

I would favor Governor Brennan over Craigen if only on their party's positions.

When you find out how any candidates stand on gay and lesbian rights, please call the Gay Phoneline (498-6556) and let me know. Thanks.

And don't forget to VOTE! Or else don't complain to me about the results.

(The Republican and Democratic party platforms are available at the Lambda office if you care to read them.) ▼

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▼ ELECTION REPORT - NEW BRUNSWICK by Benj. ▼

On Tuesday, October 12, 1982, the voters of New Brunswick cast their ballots and the results increased the number of seats held by the Progressive Conservatives in the legislature in Fredericton. The PC's now have 39 of the 58 seats; the Liberals were reduced to 18 seats; and the New Democratic Party won its first seat ever in the province. For the fourth time, Richard Hatfield was chosen to lead the province as premier. The electorate has granted him the distinction of being "senior" provincial premier in all of Canada. A native of Hartland, Carleton County, he resides within the region which NLN serves.

There has yet to be legislation introduced in New Brunswick which would protect lesbians and gaymen from discrimination, though the provincial Human Rights Commission has received complaints of such discrimination in recent years.

Dickie Hatfield, as he is affectionately known, has no reason to fear such discrimination -- his job is secure. But the rest of the gay people in New Brunswick cannot feel the same. Perhaps during this next session in Fredericton someone will introduce legislation to protect gay women and men from discrimination. Could Dickie not support such a bill? Has he ever been asked?

On behalf of the women and men of NLN, I want to take this opportunity to congratulate Mr. Hatfield on his re-election. ▼

▼ DID YOU HEAR?... ▼

...Harry Reasoner on CBS Radio? He has a commentary program weekday afternoons at 3:25 pm on WOZI/WOZW in Presque Isle/Monticello. On Tuesday, October 19, 1982, Reasoner's topic was politician's support of gay people and our desire for legislative protection. He noted that this was an issue which was supported primarily by Democrats. Four people, Senators Paul Tsongas and Ted Kennedy of Massachusetts, Representative Alan Cranston of California, and former Vice President Walter Mondale have all made appearances at fund-raising suppers for the Human Rights Campaign Fund. The Fund earmarks money for pro-gay-issues candidates. Reasoner noted how the Fund's name does not include the word 'gay'. (Is this to make us more 'acceptable'?) Reasoner commented that "the only people who vote up or down on

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the single issue of gay rights is gays themselves. Maybe there's more to be gained than lost by supporting (gay rights)."

...from the Bangor Daily News, October 11, 1982

Many courting the gay vote

WASHINGTON — A ten-foot pole has been picked up by Walter Mondale, the pole that previously he would not touch the issue of homosexual rights with. Mondale spoke at a fund-raising dinner in New York the other evening for the Human Rights Campaign Fund, a political action committee that gives money to candidates who back homosexual rights legislation.

A decade ago, a national politician siding with the gay-rights lobby, or what there was of one back then, would have been risking political suicide. Today it can be a political death wish not to be for gay rights. Mondale, who had previously stayed in the closet by avoiding public involvement with the issue, is now racing to catch up with the 1980 Democratic party platform, the National Council of Churches, Ted Kennedy, Jerry Brown and nearly 60 members of the House who are cosponsors of a gay civil-rights bill.

Mondale, a presidential aspirant though not yet fully booked into every last Holiday Inn on the campaign trail, is engaging in practical politics. Advocating gay rights puts him in favor with the estimated 20 million members of the nation's gay men and lesbian community. A large number of that



Colman McCarthy

significant minority, whether they are gay-pride activists or the emotionally self-imprisoned, have successfully persuaded many politicians that discrimination in jobs, housing, public accommodations and federal programs on the basis of sexual orientation is wrong. Legislation in the House and Senate is pending.

The political strength of the gay-rights movement was seen in the 1980 congressional elections. Supposedly that was the big year when the Moral Majority and New Right emerged as wielders of national clout. Jerry Falwell, the righteous finger-waver, said that homosexuals "are an indictment against America and are contributing to her downfall."

Falwell wondered, "If homosexuality is deemed normal, how long will it be before rape, adultery, alcoholism, drug addiction and incest are labeled

normal?" In the fall of 1980, 51 of the 55 House members who cosponsored the gay civil-rights bill were returned to Congress by the voters. Two did not seek reelection and two who lost had races in which their sponsorship of the bill was not an issue.

For all of the political advances that have been made, the country still suffers cultural homophobia — an irrational intolerance or fear of homosexuals. Even someone as intelligent as Rep. Millicent Fenwick (R-N.J.), who generally supports civil rights for homosexuals, retreats on the issue when it involves gay teachers. "We cannot have proclaimed homosexuals teaching in our schools because people will not put up with it," she said in recent hearings before the subcommittee on employment opportunities. "It is ridiculous not to have them in construction or insurance companies, who cares?"

Susan Green of the Gay Rights National Lobby correctly points out that "sexual orientation is determined by age three or four and will not change significantly thereafter...."

Colman McCarthy is a columnist for the Washington Post.

▼ DID YOU SEE?... ▼

...Newsweek magazine, issue dated October 11, 1982? On page 113, under the heading "Religion", there is an article entitled "Homosexuals in the Churches". Rather than summarize the article here, a copy is available at the Lambda office, or you may check back issues at your local public library. It is worth the time to read it. It notes the changing attitudes of members and clergy of established churches and the questioning of the interpretation of scripture.

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▼ PHONELINE REPORT ▼

Our monthly newsletter, COMMUNIQUE, is read by people all over North America. One man in Brooklyn, New York (not to be confused with Brooklin, Maine) wrote to NLN to receive the newsletter. He is building a house near Bethel, in the western part of Maine. About one week after the October newsletter was mailed, we received a letter from Paul, who had decided to join Lambda. The letter was embellished with flourishes, drawings, and beautiful penmanship. Enclosed was a check for \$100!!! He wrote that it was a donation towards the purchase of an answering machine for the new Lambda Gay Phonenumber!

Lambda wants to thank Paul for his generosity. We will now be able to purchase the machine before the new phonebooks, with "Gay Phonenumber" listed, are distributed in December. Merci beaucoup, Paul! ▼

▼ DEAR BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF NLN ▼

For the gay community of our region, we must come to a decision of being accepted as human beings. Let it be known that we exist; granted, we will be criticized and identified, but we must strive to overlook these things. As members of the NLN, we can't expect changes overnight. But if we don't have a willingness to participate and extend ourselves, where do we go from here? We must try and bring more of our sisters and brothers together. Let it be known that love and understanding come with NLN. We must all pull together to tear down the wall that continually forms in front of us. There are two questions that come to our minds when we find out we're gay. One is, "Am I really gay or is this just a phase I'm going through?" Second is, "Will my parents and family stop loving me?" You are the only one who can answer that, but if you come to NLN, we can help you accept and give you moral support. So it is the responsibility of each and every one of us to accept ourselves and our reality before we can expect society to accept us.

-- Jim ▼

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▼ DATELINE: MARION THE LIBRARIAN ▼

Story hour will not be held this week due to lack of attendance. But I would like to let you all know that there are a number of new livres in the BIBLIOTHEQUE LAMBDA. Thanks to the generous support of Leo, our father who art in Arthurette, there are thirteen more books for you to read. Six novels by Christopher Isherwood, dating from 1935 to 1977; some of his best works. Our collection of his work is almost complete. If you have never read any of this man's work, you should. He is probably our most vocal pen. Leo also donated some other classic work: Maurice, by E.M. Forster; Bent, a contemporary play about gays in Nazi concentration camps; an intriguing (so Dick says) mystery called, Skinflick; Dancer from the Dance; and Best Little Boy in the World. You'll have to read that one for yourself to find out what it is about.

Two new books from Dwight are The Homosexual and the Law, and The Custard Boys (!), not to mention tons of those torrid paperbacks that are stacked on the top shelf. More will follow later on that.

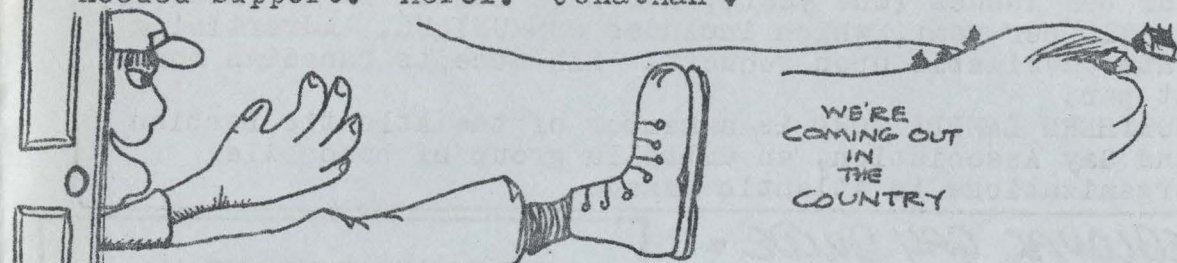
And once again, Benj. has lent three additions to the stacks. A classic work by Oscar Wilde, De Profundis, Truman Capote's The Dogs Bark, and Two Sisters, by Gore Vidal.

I would like to thank all of the fine upstanding people for their generosity, and hope that it all rubs off on all of you out there in bookland. And remember -- there is no gum allowed in the library, keep your feet off the chairs, and sssssssshhhhhhhhhhhhhhh! Thanks, Marion.▼

▼ THANK YOU, CARROLL ▼

Two weeks ago we instituted an idea of our man in Montichello and had a gripe session at our discussion group. For the first time in a long time, we saw new faces. Jim C. chaired our discussions. We were asked to write down things we did and didn't like about Lambda, and we then drew out the slips, one at a time, and went around our circle discussing the question at hand. We limited times for each person to express her or his opinion. It worked extremely well, and will be done again at the next discussion group (November 13). We talked for over two hours, and still hadn't used up all the suggestions. Those were saved. It was surprising how few gripes there were. Just the kind of gripe session I like. If you would like to get in on the next session

of this sort, just think of what you want to write down and be at the next discussion group meeting in Caribou. Thanks again, Mr. Montichello, and for the new persons that participated. We hope you'll continue your much needed support. Merci! Jonathan ▼



▼NLN BUSINESS MEETING REPORT ▼

October 24, 1982, Presque Isle, Maine.

Eighteen people were in attendance. Phil, the treasurer, reported that he had closed the books and NLN had year end (Sept 30, '82) surplusses of \$75 Canadian funds and \$89 US funds. Based upon 1982 revenue, he recommended that Lambda increase the newsletter subscription cost to \$8 (from \$7) and the membership to \$15 (from \$10). This was tabled until January for further discussion.

The phoneline has received \$100 from a member for the purchase of an answering machine which will be purchased during the next month.

Last June, when the Executive Committee's six-month terms expired, new elections were not held. At this meeting, six people were elected to complete the term which expires in January. These six executive members are: Cliff, Phil, Randy, Jim, Dick, and Roger M. The next executive elections will be in January, for a six-month term.

The calendar for the next few months is as follows:

- *Saturday, Oct 30, Presque Isle, Halloween party
- *Saturday, Nov 6, Edmundston, roller skating
- *Saturday, Nov 13, Caribou, executive meeting
- *Saturday, Nov 13, Caribou, discussion group
- *Friday, Nov 19, Caribou, office party
- *Sunday, Nov 21, Madawaska, monthly business meeting and pot luck
- *Saturday, Dec 11, Caribou, discussion group
- *Saturday, Dec 18, Presque Isle, Christmas party
- *Fri, Dec 31, Caribou, NewYear's Eve party ▼

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NORTHERN LAMBDA NORD is a member of the Atlantic Lesbian and Gay Association, an umbrella group of homophile organizations in Atlantic Canada.

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